



NSPS Newsletter

AF National Security Personnel System Office
20 April 2005

Volume 2, Number 4

Current Status

NSPS Meet and Confer Process Began on April 18th

The proposed NSPS regulations were published in the Federal Register on 14 Feb 05 for a thirty day comment period (ending 16 March 05). DoD received over 58,000 comments; these are currently being reviewed. You can read them on the [PEO NSPS web site](#).

On 18 April 05, DoD and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) began the statutory *meet and confer* process. This process lasts a minimum of 30 days and brings together DoD, OPM, and bargaining union representative to discuss areas of significant disagreement in the proposed regulations. The goal is to engage in a meaningful and constructive dialogue while working toward common ground.

Once the meet and confer process is completed, DoD and OPM will report the results to Congress. The final Federal Register Notice will then be issued.

GAO offers measured praise for NSPS

'DoD's new human resources management system will have far-reaching implications for the management of the department and for civil service reform across the federal government. NSPS could, if designed and implemented properly, serve as a model for government-wide transformation in human capital management.

'...DoD's proposed regulations reflect a growing understanding that the federal government needs to fundamentally rethink its current approach to pay and better link pay to individual and organizational performance. To this end, the DoD proposal takes another valuable step toward a modern performance management system as well as a market-based, results-oriented compensation system.'

Excerpts from [GAO report, Preliminary Observations](#), Statement of David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the United States, written statement issued 12 April 05

NSPS Training Update

Employees

Training is a fundamental aspect of NSPS

All employees will be provided training to prepare for NSPS. This training includes *soft-skills* and NSPS-specific courses. For the 'soft-skill' courses, MAJCOMs or bases **may** decide to use the no-cost change and non-supervisory skills training already available on the E-learning website found on the [Air Force Portal](#) (log-in required). Contact your local personnel office for more information.

The DoD training working group is currently developing introductory material for NSPS. This material will provide general NSPS information in fliers, brochures, and posters, beginning in April.

Training on the specific contents of NSPS will not be available until later in the year, after the meet and confer process is completed and the final NSPS regulations are written. Employees will be notified in advance of scheduled training dates.

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Supervisors

The Air Force is providing supervisors with a one-day intensive training course. This training is highly interactive and designed to provide supervisors with tools needed to prepare them for the NSPS performance management system. Students will be given techniques to enhance their negotiation skills and be taught a logical, strategic approach to negotiations and employee feedback. This course will not, however, provide supervisors with details on NSPS or its implementation; DoD will provide that training at a later date.

The Air Force believes this training is one of the best professional development courses we have in our inventory and is excited to be able to offer it on such a wide scale. This is an important step towards preparing the AF professionally for NSPS implementation. Supervisors will be notified in advance of scheduled training dates.

What You Need to Know about NSPS

Seniority continues as factor in RIF Retention

Seniority will continue to be a factor in retention standing. However, because NSPS is a performance-based system, the proposed regulations give greater weight to performance in RIF retention by placing performance ahead of length of service. Employees competing for retention under RIF with those who have the same performance rating will be retained based on length of service.

Veteran Preference is retained in NSPS

NSPS preserves veterans' preference. AF is committed to the principles of veterans' preference, and under NSPS veterans will continue to receive preference for both hiring and RIF.

Tips to Get Ready

Learn everything you can about NSPS.

- ◆ Visit the NSPS websites often. There may not be anything new each time, but it is important to stay on top of changes
- ◆ Attend town hall meetings, commander's call, and brown bag lunches when NSPS is being discussed
- ◆ Read articles in the base and community newspapers; look for informational flyers and posters
- ◆ Watch for NSPS training opportunities
- ◆ Subscribe to the NSPS E-Newsletter
- ◆ NSPS depends on lines of communications between employee and supervisor; open those lines now to get ready for the future.
- ◆ One challenge of NSPS is to orient employees toward meeting the organization goals. Ask your supervisor to help you with the 'big picture' so you know where you fit in.

Websites: DOD: www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps
AF: <http://www.dp.hq.af.mil/dpp/dppn/nsps/>

Coming to Terms

Meet and Confer: A statutory requirement for representatives of a public agency and representatives of recognized employee organizations to come together for a reasonable period of time and in good faith to attempt to resolve differences and reach agreement on matters within the scope of representation.

Soft Skills: A set of skills that influence how we interact with each other. It includes such abilities as effective communication, creativity, analytical thinking, diplomacy, flexibility, change-readiness, and problem solving, leadership, team building, and listening skills. The goal of soft skill training is to give students opportunity to learn and practice new patterns of behavior and in so doing to enhance human relations.

This newsletter is produced by the AF/DPXN staff and is provided as a public service by the Headquarters United States Air Force.

You can sign up for future editions of the U.S. Air Force NSPS News by sending a blank email to join-afdppn@mercury.afnews.af.mil and put "join-afdppn" in the subject line. A link is also on the Air Force NSPS website.